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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [OPRC](#) [CA](#) [OIIP](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQ; TURKEY

IRAQ

[1](#)1. "How to lose the war of public opinion"
Under the sub-heading, "The Bush administration might think it has enough evidence to attack Saddam Hussein, but the polls show otherwise," Calgary Herald columnist Danielle Smith wrote in the nationalist Ottawa Citizen (3/7): "Had Saddam Hussein been responsible for the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks; had he harboured Osama bin Laden and his henchmen in the fallout of the Taliban regime collapse; had the United States revealed Saddam has provided weapons of mass destruction to militant Islamic groups; had he recently invaded foreign territory, lobbed missiles at one of his neighbours, discharged chemical weapons or attacked the U.S. directly - any of these would have been sufficient grounds for an immediate attack. But there aren't clear grounds, which is why U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair should not invade Iraq.... What has Iraq done to the West, or even to its neighbours lately? The U.S. argues Iraq may supply terrorist organizations with weapons of mass destruction. That may be true, but so could a lot of other nations, and the U.S. can't wage war on them all.... There is no question that Iraq is a tragic case. Iraqis need liberation, to free them from the abuse they suffer at Saddam's hands, and to stop thousands of politically motivated executions. Saddam is an evil man, but so are many other despots and dictators, and the U.S. can't topple them all. The responsibility for regime change in Iraq ultimately lies with Iraqi citizens, not the U.S. And, in any event, the question before the UN is disarmament, not regime change. There is no question which nation is the strong horse now. Crushing Saddam Hussein to drive the point home just isn't necessary."

[1](#)2. "First Iraq, then UN"
The conservative tabloid Winnipeg Sun opined (3/7): "People keep talking about the looming irrelevancy of the United Nations if the U.S. unilaterally invades Iraq as if this was a bad thing. Why? The destruction of the UN in its present form is almost as desirable as ridding the world of Saddam Hussein. The UN's fatal flaw is that it treats every member state the same, regardless of its human rights record. Because its dictatorships so often act in concert, the UN has run amok for years.... Post 9/11, America has every justification for war. Not only is Saddam a cruel tyrant to his own people who has attacked three neighbours, he has vigorously pursued weapons of mass destruction and financially supported terrorism.... We don't share George Bush's view that toppling Saddam will inspire a wave of democracy in the Mideast's thuggish dictators. But it will warn them, effectively, that from now on there will be a price to pay for following Iraq's lead. As for the UN, its few worthwhile aid and humanitarian programs can be revived under a new global organization in which democracies, not dictatorships, must play the dominant role."

TURKEY

[1](#)3. "The day the Turks came out"
Columnist Jeffrey Simpson commented in the leading Globe and Mail (3/7): "...The Turkish government could scarcely believe it lost the vote. Washington was stunned. After all, Turkey has been a strong U.S. ally and a NATO member, and had been a front-line state during the 1991 Persian Gulf war.... Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government had all kinds of political capital. It had received an overwhelming mandate in November to clean up Turkish politics. Although nominally an Islamist party, Mr. Erdogan's team said and did everything to convince Western countries that Turkey would remain a faithful ally. Now this. The Turks, who know Iraq, understand that, despite today's sweet pronouncements about respecting borders, there are Kurds in eastern Turkey and Kurds in northern Iraq (and in Syria and Iran), and that blood often runs thicker than the water of political declarations of intent. They know that, after the Americans leave Iraq, the Turks will be left to cope with its ethnic rivalries. The hint of Turkish troops entering northern

Iraq with the Americans inflamed Iraqi Kurds; the idea of a quasi-autonomous Kurdish territory inside Iraq frightened the Turks. The Turks don't like Saddam Hussein, but they don't fear him, either, and they are a lot closer to his regime than the U.S. is. The Turkish military prizes its relationship with the U.S. military. Maybe the generals and better parliamentary tactics can reverse what happened in parliament. Even so, the first vote reflected well on Turkish democracy and sent a signal - which will undoubtedly be ignored in Washington - that the people of yet another friendly country have deserted the United States."

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